

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method comprising:
 - identifying a first portion of a first message in a first slice of a switch, the first message associated with a first priority, the first portion of the first message including a first routing portion specifying a network resource;
 - identifying a second portion of the first message in a second slice of the switch, the second portion of the first message including the first routing portion;
 - identifying a first portion of a second message in the first slice, the second message associated with a second priority, the first portion of the second message including a second routing portion specifying the network resource;
 - identifying a second portion of the second message in the second slice, the second portion of the second message including the second routing portion;
 - selecting, independently in each slice by using an arbiter included in each slice, ~~the same one of the first and second messages~~ either the first or second message based on the first and second priorities;
 - sending the first portion of the selected message from the first slice to the network resource specified by the ~~one of the first and~~ routing portion or the second routing portions ~~portion~~ corresponding to the selected message; and
 - sending the second portion of the selected message from the second slice to the network resource specified by the ~~one of the first and~~ routing portion or the second routing portions ~~portion~~ corresponding to the selected message.
2. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
 - associating the first and second priorities with the first and second messages based on the ages of the first and second messages.
3. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
 - dividing each message to create the first and second portions;

sending the first portions to the first slice; and
sending the second portions to the second slice.

4. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the network resource is a memory resource.

5. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the network resource is a processor.

6. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the network resource is a crossbar.

7. (Currently Amended) A method for use in a first slice of a switch having first and second slices, comprising:

identifying a first portion of a first message, the first message associated with a first priority, the first portion of the first message including a first routing portion specifying a network resource, wherein a second portion of the first message resides in the second slice, the second portion of the first message including the first routing portion;

identifying a first portion of a second message in the first slice, the second message associated with a second priority, the first portion of the second message including a second routing portion specifying the network resource, wherein a second portion of the second message resides in the second slice, the second portion of the second message including the second routing portion;

selecting ~~one of the first and~~ message or the second messages message utilizing a first arbiter included in the first slice and based on the first and second priorities, wherein the second slice independently selects the same ~~one of the first and second messages~~ message utilizing a second arbiter included in the second slice and based on the first and second priorities; and

sending the first portion of the selected message from the first slice to the network resource specified by the ~~one of the first and~~ routing portion or the second routing portions portion corresponding to the selected message; and wherein

the second slice sends the second portion of the selected message from the second slice to the network resource specified by the ~~one of the first and~~ routing portion or the second routing portions portion corresponding to the selected message.

8. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 7, wherein the network resource is a memory resource.

9. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 7, wherein the network resource is a processor.

10. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 7, wherein the network resource is a crossbar.

11. (Currently Amended) An apparatus comprising:
means for identifying a first portion of a first message in a first slice of a switch, wherein the first slice comprises a first arbiter, the first message associated with a first priority, the first portion of the first message including a first routing portion specifying a network resource;
means for identifying a second portion of the first message in a second slice of the switch, wherein the second slice comprises a second arbiter, the second portion of the first message including the first routing portion;
means for identifying a first portion of a second message in the first slice, the second message associated with a second priority, the first portion of the second message including a second routing portion specifying the network resource;
means for identifying a second portion of the second message in the second slice, the second portion of the second message including the second routing portion;
means for selecting, independently in each slice and utilizing the first arbiter in the first slice and the second arbiter in the second slice, ~~the same one of the first and second messages~~ either the first or second message based on the first and second priorities;
means for sending the first portion of the selected message from the first slice to the network resource specified by the ~~one of the first and~~ routing portion or the second routing portions portion corresponding to the selected message; and
means for sending the second portion of the selected message from the second slice to the network resource specified by the ~~one of the first and~~ routing portion or the second

routing ~~portions~~ portion corresponding to the selected message.

12. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 11, further comprising:

means for associating the first and second priorities with the first and second messages based on the ages of the first and second messages.

13. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 11, further comprising:
means for dividing each message to create the first and second portions;
means for sending the first portions to the first slice; and
means for sending the second portions to the second slice.

14. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 11, wherein the network resource is a memory resource.

15. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 11, wherein the network resource is a processor.

16. (Previously Presented) An apparatus of claim 11, wherein the network resource is a crossbar.

17. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for use in a first slice of a switch having first and second slices, comprising:

means for identifying a first portion of a first message, the first message associated with a first priority, the first portion of the first message including a first routing portion specifying a network resource, wherein a second portion of the first message resides in the second slice, the second portion of the first message including the first routing portion;

means for identifying a first portion of a second message in the first slice, the second message associated with a second priority, the first portion of the second message including a second routing portion specifying the network resource, wherein a second portion of the second message resides in the second slice, the second portion of the second message including the second routing portion;

means for selecting ~~one of the first and~~ message or the second messages message utilizing a first arbiter included in the first slice and based on the first and second priorities,

wherein the second slice independently selects the same ~~one of the first and second messages~~ message utilizing the second arbiter included in the second slice and based on the first and second priorities; and

means for sending the first portion of the selected message from the first slice to the network resource specified by the ~~one of the first and~~ routing portion or the second routing portions portion corresponding to the selected message; and wherein

the second slice sends the second portion of the selected message from the second slice to the network resource specified by the ~~one of the first and~~ routing portion or the second routing portions portion corresponding to the selected message.

18. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 17, wherein the network resource is a memory resource.

19. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 17, wherein the network resource is a processor.

20. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 17, wherein the network resource is a crossbar.